

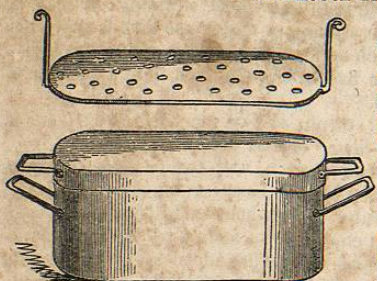
then drop lightly into it five ounces of good fresh vermicelli; keep the milk stirred as this is added, to prevent its gathering into lumps, and continue to stir it very frequently from fifteen to twenty minutes, or until it is perfectly tender. The addition of a little pounded sugar and powdered cinnamon, renders this a very agreeable dish. In Catholic countries, milk soups of various kinds constantly supply the place of those made with meat, on *maigre* days; and with us they are sometimes very acceptable, as giving a change of diet for the nursery or sick room. Rice, semolina, sago, cocoa-nut, and macaroni may all in turn be used for them as directed for other soups in this chapter, but they will be required in rather smaller proportions with the milk.

Milk, 5 pints; vermicelli, 5 ozs.: 15 to 20 minutes.

CHAPTER II.

FISH.

TO CHOOSE FISH.



Copper Fish or Ham Kettle.

THE cook should be well acquainted with the signs of freshness and good condition in fish, as many of them are most unwholesome articles of food when stale, or out of season.

The eyes should be bright, the gills of a fine clear red, the body stiff, the flesh firm, yet elastic to the touch, and the smell not disagreeable. When all these marks are reversed, and the eyes are sunken, the gills very dark in hue, the fish itself flabby and of offensive odour, it is bad, and should be avoided. The chloride of soda, will, it is true, restore it to a tolerably eatable state,* if it be not very much over-kept, but it will never resemble in quality fish that is fresh from the water.



Small Fish Kettle, called a Mackerel Kettle.

A good turbot is thick, and full fleshed, and the under side is of a pale cream colour or yellowish white; when this is of a bluish tint, and the fish is thin and soft, it should be rejected. The same observations apply equally to soles.

The best salmon and cod fish are known by a small head, very thick shoulders, and a small tail; the scales of the former should be bright, and its flesh of a fine red colour: to be eaten in perfection it should be dressed as soon as it is caught, before the curd (or white substance which lies between the flakes of flesh) has melted

* We have known this applied very successfully to salmon which from some hours keeping in sultry weather had acquired a slight degree of taint, of which no trace remained after it was dressed.

and rendered the fish oily. In that state it is really *crimp*, but continues so only for a very few hours; and it bears therefore a much higher price in the London market then, than when mellowed by having been kept a day or two.

The flesh of cod fish should be white and clear before it is boiled, whiter still after it is boiled, and firm though tender, sweet and mild in flavour, and separated easily into large flakes. Many persons consider it rather improved than otherwise by having a little salt rubbed along the inside of the back-bone and letting it lie from twenty-four to forty-eight hours before it is dressed. It is sometimes served crimp like salmon, and must then be sliced as soon as it is dead, or within the shortest possible time afterwards.

Herrings, mackerel, and whittings, lose their freshness so rapidly, that unless newly caught they are quite uneatable. The herring may, it is said, be deprived of the strong rank smell which it emits when broiled or fried, by stripping off the skin, under which lies the oil that causes the disagreeable odour. The whiting is a peculiarly pure flavoured and delicate fish, and acceptable generally to invalids from being very light of digestion.

Eels should be alive and brisk in movement when they are purchased, but the "horrid barbarity," as it is truly designated, of skinning and dividing them while they are so, is without excuse, as they are easily destroyed "by piercing the spinal marrow close to the back part of the skull with a sharp pointed knife, or skewer. If this be done in the right place all motion will instantly cease." We quote Doctor Kitchener's assertion on this subject; but we know that the mode of destruction which he recommends is commonly practised by the London fishmongers. Boiling water also will immediately cause vitality to cease, and is perhaps the most humane and ready method of destroying the fish.

Lobsters, prawns, and shrimps are very stiff when freshly boiled, and the tails turn strongly inwards; when these relax, and the fish are soft and watery, they are stale; and the smell will detect their being so instantly even if no other symptoms of it be remarked. If bought alive, lobsters should be chosen by their weight and "liveliness." The hen lobster is preferred for sauce and soups, on account of the coral; but the flesh of the male is generally considered of finer flavour for eating. The vivacity of their leaps will show when prawns and shrimps are fresh from the sea.

Oysters should close forcibly on the knife when they are opened: if the shells are apart ever so little they are losing their condition, and when they remain far open the fish are dead, and fit only to be thrown away. Small plump natives are very preferable to the larger and coarser kinds.

TO CLEAN FISH.

Let this be done always with the most scrupulous nicety, for nothing can more effectually destroy the appetite, or *disgrace the cook*, than fish sent to table imperfectly cleaned. Handle it lightly, and never throw it roughly about, so as to bruise it; wash it well, but do not leave it longer in the water than is necessary, for fish, like meat, loses its flavour from being soaked. When the scales are to be removed, lay the fish flat upon its side, and hold it firmly with the left hand, while they are scraped off with the right; turn it, and when both sides are done, pour or pump sufficient water over to float off all the loose scales;

then proceed to open and empty it. Be sure that not the slightest particle of offensive matter be left in the inside; wash out the blood entirely, and scrape or brush it away, if needful, from the back-bone. This may easily be accomplished, without opening the fish so much as to render it unsightly when it is sent to table. The red mullet is dressed without being emptied, and smelts are drawn at the gills. When the scales are left on, the outside of the fish should be well washed and wiped with a coarse cloth, drawn gently from the head to the tail. Eels, to be wholesome, should be skinned, but they are sometimes dressed without; boiling water should then be poured upon them, and they should be left in it from five to ten minutes, before they are cut up. The dark skin of the sole must be stripped off when it is fried, but it must be left on, like that of a turbot, when the fish is boiled, and it should be dished with the white side upwards. Whittings are skinned, and dipped usually into egg and bread-crumbs, when they are to be fried; but for boiling or broiling, the skin must be left on.

TO KEEP FISH.

We find that all the smaller kinds of fish keep best if emptied and cleaned as soon as they are brought in, then wiped gently as dry as they can be, and hung separately by the head on the hooks in the ceiling of a cool larder, or in the open air when the weather will allow. When there is danger of their being attacked by flies, a wire safe, placed in a strong draught of air, is better adapted to the purpose. Soles in winter will remain good a couple of days when thus prepared; and even whittings and mackerel may be kept so without losing any of their excellence. Salt may be rubbed slightly over cod fish, and well along the back-bone, but it injures the flavour of salmon, the inside of which may be rubbed with vinegar, and peppered instead. When excessive sultriness renders all of these modes unavailing, the fish must at once be partially cooked to preserve it, but this should be avoided if possible, as it is very rarely so good when this method is resorted to.

TO SWEETEN TAINTED FISH.

The application of the pyroligneous acid will effect this when the taint is but slight. A wineglassful, mixed with two of water, may be poured over the fish, and rubbed upon the parts more particularly requiring it; it must then be left for some minutes untouched, and afterwards washed in several waters, and soaked until the smell of the acid is no longer perceptible. The chloride of soda, from its powerful antiputrescent properties, will have more effect when the fish is in a worse state. It should be applied in the same manner, and will not at all injure the flavour of the fish, which is not fit for food when it cannot be perfectly purified by either of these means. The chloride may be diluted more or less, as occasion may require.

BRINE FOR BOILING FISH.

Fish is exceedingly insipid if sufficient salt be not mixed with the water in which it is boiled, but the precise quantity required for it will depend, in some measure, upon the kind of salt which is used. Fine common salt is that for which our directions are given; but when the Maldon salt, which is very superior in strength, as well as in its other qualities, is substituted for it, a smaller quantity must be allowed.

About four ounces to the gallon of water will be sufficient for small fish in general; an additional ounce, or rather more, will not be too much for cod fish, lobsters, crabs, prawns, and shrimps; and salmon will require eight ounces, as the brine for this fish should be strong: the water should always be perfectly well skimmed from the moment the scum begins to form upon the surface.

Mackerel, whiting, and other small fish, 4 ozs. of salt to a gallon of water. Cod fish, lobsters, crabs, prawns, shrimps, 5 to 6 ozs. Salmon, 8 ozs.

TO RENDER BOILED FISH FIRM.

Put a small bit of saltpetre with the salt into the water in which it is boiled: a quarter-ounce will be sufficient for a gallon.

TO KEEP FISH HOT FOR TABLE.

Never leave it in the water after it is done; but if it cannot be sent to table as soon as it is ready to serve, lift it out, lay the fish-plate into a large and very hot dish, and set it across the fish-kettle; just dip a clean cloth into the boiling water, and spread it upon the fish; place a tin cover over it, and let it remain so until two or three minutes before it is wanted, then remove the cloth, and put the fish back into the kettle for an instant that it may be as hot as possible; drain, dish, and serve it immediately: the water should be kept boiling the whole time.

TO BOIL A TURBOT.

In season all the year.

A fine turbot, in full season, and well served, is one of the most delicate and delicious fish that can be sent to table; but it is generally an expensive dish, and its excellence so much depends on the manner in which it is dressed, that great care should be taken to prepare it properly. After it is emptied, wash the inside until it is perfectly cleansed, and rub *lightly* a little fine salt over the outside, as this will render less washing and handling necessary, by at once taking off the slime; change the water several times, and when the fish is as clean as it is possible to render it, draw a sharp knife through the thickest part of the middle of the back nearly through to the bone. *Never cut off the fins* of a turbot when preparing it for table, and remember that it is the dark side of the fish in which the incision is to be made, to prevent the skin of the white side from cracking. Dissolve in a well-cleaned turbot, or common fish-kettle, in as much cold spring water as will cover the fish abundantly, salt, in the proportion of four ounces to the gallon, and a *morsel* of saltpetre; wipe the fish-plate with a clean cloth, lay the turbot upon it with the white side upwards, place it in the kettle, bring it slowly to boil, and clear off the scum *thoroughly* as it rises. Let the water only just simmer until the fish is done, then lift it out, drain, and slide it gently on to a very hot dish, with a hot napkin neatly arranged over the drainer. Send it immediately to table with rich lobster sauce, good plain melted butter, and a dish of dressed cucumber. For a simple dinner, anchovy, or shrimp-sauce is sometimes served with a small turbot. Should there be any cracks in the skin of the fish, branches of curled parsley may be laid lightly over them, or part of the inside coral of the lobster, rubbed through a fine hair-sieve, may be sprinkled over the fish; but it is better without either, when it is very white, and unbroken. When garnishings are in favour, a slice of

lemon and a tuft of curled parsley may be placed alternately round the edge of the dish. A border of fried smelts, or of fillets of soles, was formerly served, in general, round a turbot, and is always a very admissible addition, though no longer so fashionable as it was. From fifteen to twenty minutes will boil a moderate-sized fish, and from twenty to thirty a large one; but as the same time will not always be sufficient for a fish of the same weight, the cook must watch it attentively, and lift it out as soon as its appearance denotes its being done.

Moderate sized-turbot, 15 to 20 minutes. Large, 20 to 30 minutes. Longer, if of unusual size.

Obs.—A lemon gently squeezed, and rubbed over the fish, is thought to preserve its whiteness. Some good cooks still put turbot into *boiling* water, and to prevent its breaking, tie it with a cloth tightly to the fish-plate; but cold water seems better adapted to it, as it is desirable that it should be gradually heated through before it begins to boil.

TURBOT A LA CREME.

Raise carefully from the bones the flesh of a cold turbot, and clear it from the dark skin; cut it into small squares, and put it into an exceedingly clean stewpan or saucepan; then make and pour upon it the cream-sauce of Chapter IV., or make as much as may be required for the fish by the same receipt, with equal proportions of milk and cream, and a little additional flour. Heat the turbot slowly in the sauce, but do not allow it to boil, and send it very hot to table. The white skin of the fish is not usually added to this dish, and it is of better appearance without it; but for a family dinner, it may be left on the flesh, when it is much liked. No acid must be stirred to the sauce until the whole is ready for table.

[TO BROIL SALMON.

This is a good method of dressing a small quantity of salmon for one or two persons. It may be cut in slices the whole round of the fish, each taking in two divisions of the bone; or the fish may be split, and the bone removed, and the sides of the fish divided into cutlets of three or four inches each: the former method is preferable, if done neatly with a sharp knife. Rub it thoroughly dry with a clean rough cloth; then do each piece over with salad oil or butter. Have a nice clean gridiron over a very clear fire, and at some distance from it. When the bars are hot through wipe them, and rub with lard or suet to prevent sticking; lay on the salmon, and sprinkle with salt. When one side is brown, carefully turn and brown the other. They do equally well or better in a tin or flat dish, in an oven, with a little bit of butter, or sweet oil; or they may be done in buttered paper on the gridiron. Sauce, lobster or shrimp.

TO BAKE SALMON.

If a small fish, turn the tail to the mouth, and skewer it; forcemeat may be put in the belly, or, if part of a large fish is to be baked, cut it in slices, egg it over, and dip it in the forcemeat. Stick bits of butter about the salmon (a few oysters laid round are an improvement.) It will require occasional basting with the butter. When one side becomes brown, let it be carefully turned, and when the second side is brown, it is done. Take it up carefully, with all that lies about it in the baking dish. For sauce, melted butter, with two tablespoonsful of

port wine, one of catsup, and the juice of a lemon, poured over the fish, or anchovy sauce in a boat.

PICKLE SALMON.

Do not scrape off the scales, but clean the fish carefully, and cut into pieces about eight inches long. Make a strong brine of salt and water; to two quarts, put two pounds of salt, and a quarter of a pint of vinegar; in all, make just enough to cover the fish; boil it slowly, and barely as much as you would for eating hot. Drain off all the liquor; and, when cold, lay the pieces in a kit or small tub. Pack it as close as possible, and fill up with equal parts of best vinegar and the liquor in which the fish was boiled. Let it remain so a day or two, then again fill up. Serve with a garnish of fresh fennel. The same method of pickling will apply to sturgeon, mackerel, herrings, and sprats. The three latter are sometimes baked in vinegar, flavoured with allspice and bay leaves, and eat very well; but will not keep more than a few days.]

TO BOIL SALMON.

In full season from May to August: may be had much earlier, but is scarce and dear.

To preserve the fine colour of this fish, and to *set the curd* when it is quite freshly caught, it is usual to put it into *boiling*, instead of cold water. Scale, empty, and wash it with the greatest nicety, and be especially careful to cleanse all the blood from the inside. Stir into the fish-kettle eight ounces of common salt to the gallon of water, let it boil quickly for a minute or two, take off all the scum, put in the salmon and boil it moderately fast, if it be small, but more gently should it be very thick; and assure yourself that it is quite sufficiently done, before it is sent to table, for nothing can be more distasteful, even to the eye, than fish which is under dressed.

From two to three pounds of the thick part of a fine salmon will require half an hour to boil it, but eight or ten pounds will be done enough in little more than double that time; less, in proportion to its weight, should be allowed for a small fish, or for the thin end of a large one. Do not allow the salmon to remain in the water after it is ready to serve, or both its flavour and appearance will be injured. Dish it on a hot napkin, and send dressed cucumber, and anchovy, shrimp, or lobster sauce, and a tureen of plain melted butter to table with it.

To each gallon of water, 8 ozs. salt. Salmon, 2 to 3 lbs. (thick) $\frac{1}{2}$ hour: 8 to 10 lbs., $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour: small, or thin fish, less time.

Obs.—A fashionable mode of serving salmon at the present day is to divide the larger portion of the body into three equal parts; to boil them in water, or in a marinade; and to serve them dished in a line, but not close together, and covered with a rich Genevese sauce; it appears to us that the skin should be stripped from any fish over which the sauce is poured, but in this case it is not customary.

CRIMPED SALMON.

Cut into slices an inch and a half, or two inches thick, the body of a salmon *quite newly caught*; throw them into strong salt and water as they are done, but do not let them soak in it; wash them well, lay them on a fish-plate, and put them into fast-boiling water, salted, and well skimmed. In from ten to fifteen minutes they will be done. Dish them on a napkin, and send them very hot to table with lobster sauce, and plain melted butter; or with the caper fish sauce of Chapter IV.

The water should be salted as for salmon boiled in the ordinary way, and the scum should be cleared off with great care after the fish is in.

In boiling water, 10 to 15 minutes.

SALMON A LA ST. MARCEL.

Separate some cold boiled salmon into flakes, and free them entirely from the skin; break the bones, and boil them in a pint of water for half an hour. Strain off the liquor, put it into a clean saucepan and stir into it by degrees when it begins to boil quickly, two ounces of butter mixed with a large teaspoonful of flour, and when the whole has boiled for two or three minutes add a teaspoonful of essence of anchovies, one of good mushroom catsup, half as much lemon-juice or Chili vinegar, a half teaspoonful of pounded mace, some cayenne, and a very little salt. Heat the fish very slowly in the sauce by the side of the fire, but do not allow it to boil. When it is very hot, dish, and send it quickly to table. French cooks, when they re-dress fish or meat of any kind, prepare the flesh with great nicety, and then put it into a stewpan, and pour the sauce upon it, which is, we think, better than the more usual English mode of laying it into the boiling sauce. The cold salmon may also be re-heated in the cream sauce of Chapter IV. or in the Maître d'Hotel sauce which follows it; and will be found excellent with either. This receipt is for a moderate sized dish.

Obs.—We regret that we cannot give insertion to a larger number of receipts for dressing this truly excellent fish, which answers for almost every mode of cookery. It may be fried in cutlets, broiled, baked, roasted, or stewed; served in a common, or in a raised pie, or in a potato-pasty; in a salad, in jelly; collared, smoked, or pickled; and will be found good prepared by any of these processes. A rather full seasoning of savoury herbs is thought to correct the effect of the natural richness of the salmon. For directions to broil, bake, or roast it, the reader is referred to Chapter VII.

TO BOIL COD FISH.

In highest season from October to the beginning of February; in perfection about Christmas.

When this fish is large, the head and shoulders are sufficient for a handsome dish, and they contain all the choicer portion of it, though not so much substantial eating, as the middle of the body, which, in consequence, is generally preferred to them by the frugal housekeeper. Wash the fish, and cleanse the inside, and the back-bone in particular, with the most scrupulous care; lay it into the fish kettle and cover it well with cold water mixed with five ounces of salt to the gallon, and about a quarter ounce of saltpetre to the whole. Place it over a moderate fire, clear off the scum perfectly, and let the fish boil gently until it is done. Drain it well* and dish it carefully upon a very hot napkin with the liver and the roe as a garnish. To these are usually added tufts of lightly scraped horse-raddish round the edge. Serve well made oyster sauce and plain melted butter with it; or anchovy sauce when oysters cannot be procured. The cream sauce of Chapter IV. is also an appropriate one for this fish.

Moderate sized, 20 to 30 minutes. Large, $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ hour.

*This should be done by setting the fish-plate across the kettle for a minute or two.

SLICES OF COD FISH FRIED.

Cut the middle or tail of the fish into slices nearly an inch thick, season them with salt and white pepper or cayenne, flour them well, and fry them of a clear equal brown on both sides; drain them on a sieve before the fire, and serve them on a well-heated napkin, with plenty of crisped parsley round them. Or, dip them into beaten egg, and then into fine crumbs mixed with a seasoning of salt and pepper (some cooks add one of minced herbs also,) before they are fried. Send melted butter and anchovy sauce to table with them.

8 to 12 minutes.

Obs.—This is a much better way of dressing the thin part of the fish than boiling it, and as it is generally cheap, it makes thus an economical, as well as a very good dish: if the slices are lifted from the frying-pan into a good curried gravy, and left in it by the side of the fire for a few minutes before they are sent to table, they will be found excellent.

STEWED COD.

Put into boiling water, salted as usual, about three pounds of fresh cod fish cut into slices an inch and a half thick, and boil them gently for five minutes; lift them out, and let them drain. Have ready-heated in a wide stewpan nearly a pint of veal gravy or of very good broth, lay in the fish, and stew it for five minutes, then add four table-spoonfuls of extremely fine bread-crumbs, and simmer it for three minutes longer. Stir well into the sauce a large teaspoonful of arrow-root, quite free from lumps, a fourth part as much of mace, something less of cayenne, and a table-spoonful of essence of anchovies, mixed with a glass of white wine and a dessert-spoonful of lemon juice. Boil the whole for a couple of minutes, lift out the fish carefully with a slice, pour the sauce over, and serve it quickly.

Cod fish, 3 lbs.: boiled 5 minutes. Gravy, or strong broth, nearly 1 pint: 5 minutes. Bread-crumbs, 4 table-spoonful: 3 minutes. Arrow-root, 1 large teaspoonful; mace, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoonful; less of cayenne; essence of anchovies, 1 table-spoonful; lemon-juice, 1 dessert-spoonful; sherry or Madeira, 1 wine-glassful: 2 minutes.

Obs.—A dozen or two of oysters, bearded, and added with their strained liquor to this dish two or three minutes before it is served, will, to many tastes, vary it very agreeably.

STEWED COD FISH, IN BROWN SAUCE.

Slice the fish, take off the skin, flour it well, and fry it quickly a fine brown; lift it out and drain it on the back of a sieve, arrange it in a clean stewpan, and pour in as much good brown gravy, boiling, as will nearly cover it; add from one to two glasses of port wine, or rather more of claret, a dessert-spoonful of Chili vinegar, or the juice of half a lemon, and some cayenne, with as much salt as may be needed. Stew the fish very softly until it just begins to break, lift it carefully with a slice into a very hot dish, stir into the gravy an ounce and a half of butter, smoothly kneaded with a large teaspoonful of flour, and a little pounded mace, give the sauce a minute's boil, pour it over the fish, and serve it immediately. The wine may be omitted, good shin of beef stock substituted for the gravy, and a teaspoonful of soy, one of essence of anchovies, and two table-spoonfuls of Harvey's sauce added to flavour it.

TO BOIL SALT FISH.

When very salt and dry, this must be long-soaked before it is boiled, but it is generally supplied by the fishmongers nearly or quite ready to dress. When it is not so, lay it for a night into a large quantity of cold water, then let it lie exposed to the air for some time, then again put it into water, and continue thus until it is well softened. Brush it very clean, wash it thoroughly, and put it with abundance of cold water into the fish kettle, place it near the fire and let it heat very slowly indeed. Keep it just on the point of simmering, without allowing it ever to *boil* (which would render it hard), from three quarters of an hour to a full hour, according to its weight; should it be quite small and thin, less time will be sufficient for it; but by following these directions, the fish will be almost as good as if it were fresh. The scum should be cleared off with great care from the beginning. Egg sauce and boiled parsneps are the usual accompaniments to salt fish, which should be dished upon a hot napkin, and which is sometimes also thickly strewed with chopped eggs.

SALT FISH; (*a la Maître d'Hotel.*)

Boil the fish by the foregoing receipt, or take the remains of that which has been served at table, flake it off clear from the bones, and strip away every morsel of the skin; then lay it into a very clean saucepan or stewpan, and pour upon it the sharp Maître d'Hotel sauce of Chapter IV.; or, dissolve gently two or three ounces of butter with four or five spoonful of water, and a half-teaspoonful of flour; add some pepper or cayenne, very little salt, and a dessertspoonful or more of minced parsley. Heat the fish slowly quite through in either of these sauces, and toss or stir it until the whole is well mixed; if the second be used, add the juice of half a lemon, or a small quantity of Chili vinegar, just before it is taken from the fire. The fish thus prepared may be served in a deep dish, with a border of mashed parsneps or potatoes.

TO BOIL CODS SOUNDS.

Should they be highly salted, soak them for a night, and on the following day, rub off entirely the discoloured skin; wash them well, lay them into plenty of cold milk and water, and boil them gently from thirty to forty minutes, or longer, should they not be quite tender. Clear off the scum as it rises with great care, or it will sink, and adhere to the sounds, of which the appearance will then be spoiled. Drain them well, dish them on a napkin, and send egg sauce and plain melted butter to table with them.

TO FRY CODS' SOUNDS IN BATTER.

Boil them as directed above, until they are nearly done, then lift them out, lay them on to a drainer, and let them remain till they are cold; cut them across in strips of an inch deep, curl them round, dip them into a good French or English batter, fry them of a fine pale brown, drain and dry them well, dish them on a hot napkin, and garnish them with crisped parsley.

[TO MAKE CHOWDER.]

Lay some slices cut from the fat part of pork in a deep stew-pan, mix sliced onions with a variety of sweet herbs, and lay them on the pork; bone and cut a fresh cod into thin slices, and place them on the pork,

then put a layer of pork, on that a layer of biscuit, then alternately the other materials until the pan is nearly full, season with pepper and salt, put in about a quart of water, cover the stew-pan very close, and let it stand, with fire above as well as below, for four hours; then skim it well, and it is done.

TO BOIL ROCK-FISH, BLACK-FISH, AND SEA-BASS.

Clean the fish with scrupulous care, particularly the back-bone, then lay the fish into the fish-kettle and cover it with cold water, strewing in a handful of salt (and a small pinch of saltpetre, if you have it), and place it over a moderate fire. Clean off the scum carefully, and let it boil very gently till it is done; then drain it, as directed for cod-fish, and dish it nicely—garnished with hard-boiled eggs, cut in halves. Celery sauce, or anchovy sauce, is the proper kind for these fish, or plain melted butter.

TO BOIL HALIBUT.

Take a small halibut, or what you require from a large fish. Put it into the fish-kettle, with the back of the fish undermost, cover it with cold water, in which a handful of salt and a bit of saltpetre, the size of a hazle-nut, have been dissolved. When it begins to boil skim it carefully, and then let it just simmer till it is done. Four pounds of fish will require half an hour, nearly, to boil it. Drain it, garnish with horse-radish or parsley—egg sauce, or plain melted butter, are served with it.]

FILLETS OF HALIBUT, BLACK-FISH, &c.

The word *fillet*, whether applied to fish, poultry, game, or butcher's meat, means simply the flesh of either (or of certain portions of it), raised clear from the bones in a handsome form, and divided or not, as the manner in which it is to be served may require. It is an elegant mode of dressing various kinds of fish, and even those which are not the most highly esteemed, afford an excellent dish when thus prepared. The fish, to be filleted with advantage, should be large; the flesh may then be divided down the middle of the back, next, separated from the fins, and with a very sharp knife raised clean from the bones.* When thus prepared, the fillets may be divided, trimmed into a good form, egged, covered with fine crumbs, fried in the usual way, and served with the same sauces as the whole fish; or each fillet may be rolled up, in its entire length, if very small, or after being once divided, if large, and fastened with a slight twine, or a short thin skewer; then egged, crumbed, and fried in plenty of boiling lard; or merely well floured and fried from eight to ten minutes. When the fish are not very large, they are sometimes boned without being parted in the middle, and each side is rolled from the tail to the head, after being first spread with butter, a few bread-crumbs, and a high seasoning of mace and cayenne; or with pounded lobster mixed with a large portion of the coral, and the same seasoning, and proportion of butter; then laid into a dish, well covered with crumbs of bread and clarified butter, and baked from twelve to sixteen minutes, or until the crumbs are coloured to a fine brown in a moderate oven.

* A celebrated French cook gives the following instructions for raising these fillets:—"Take them up by running your knife first between the bones and the flesh, then between the skin and the fillet; by leaning pretty hard on the table they will come off very neatly."

The fillets may likewise be cut into small strips or squares of uniform size, lightly dredged with pepper or cayenne, salt and flour, and fried in butter over a brisk fire; then well drained, and sauced with a good bechamel, flavoured with a teaspoonful of minced parsley.

BAKED SOLES, HALIBUT AND CARP.

Clarify from two to three ounces of fresh butter, and pour it into the dish in which the fish are to be served; add to it a little salt, some cayenne, a teaspoonful of essence of anchovies, and from one to two glasses of sherry, or of any other dry white wine; lay in a couple of fine soles which have been well cleaned and wiped very dry, strew over them a thick layer of fine bread-crumbs, moisten them with clarified butter, set the dish into a moderate oven, and bake the fish a quarter of an hour; we would recommend a little lemon-juice to be mixed with the sauce.

Baked 15 minutes.

Obs.—The fish are, we think, better without the wine in this receipt. They require but a small portion of liquid, which might be supplied by a little additional butter, a spoonful of water or pale gravy, the lemon-juice, and store-sauce. Minced parsley may be mixed with the bread-crumbs when it is liked.

SOLES OR CARP STEWED IN CREAM.

Prepare some very fresh middling sized fish with exceeding nicety, put them into boiling water slightly salted, and simmer them for two minutes only; lift them out, and let them drain; lay them into a wide stewpan with as much sweet rich cream as will nearly cover them; add a good seasoning of pounded mace, cayenne and salt; stew the fish softly from six to ten minutes, or until the flesh parts readily from the bones; dish them, stir the juice of half a lemon to the sauce, pour it over the soles, and send them immediately to table. Some lemon-rind may be boiled in the cream, if approved; and a small teaspoonful of arrow-root, very smoothly mixed with a little milk, may be stirred to the sauce (should it require thickening) before the lemon-juice is added. Turbot and brill also may be dressed by this receipt, time, proportioned to their size, being of course allowed for them.

Soles, 3 or 4: boiled in water 2 minutes. Cream, $\frac{1}{2}$ to whole pint; salt, mace, cayenne: fish stewed, 6 to 10 minutes. Juice of half a lemon.

[TO BOIL STURGEON.]

Take off the skin, which is very rich and oily; cut in slices; season with pepper and salt; broil over a clear fire; rub over each slice a bit of butter, and serve with no other accompaniment than lemon; or the slices may be dipped in seasoning or forcemeat, twisted in buttered white paper, and so broiled. For sauce, serve melted butter with catsup. Garnish with sliced lemon, as the juice is generally used with the fish.

TO ROAST STURGEON.

A piece of sturgeon may be tied securely on a spit, and roasted. Keep it constantly basted with butter, and when nearly done dredge with bread crumbs. When the flakes begin to separate, it is done. It will take about half an hour before a brisk fire. Serve with good gravy, thickened with butter and flour, and enriched with an anchovy, a glass of sherry wine, and the juice of half a Seville orange or lemon.

TO STEW STURGEON.

Take enough gravy to cover the fish; set it on with a tablespoonful of salt, a few corns of black pepper, a bunch of sweet herbs, an onion or two, scraped horse-radish, and a glass of vinegar. Let this boil a few minutes; then set it aside to become pretty cool; then add the fish; let it come gradually to boil; and then stew gently till the fish begins to break. Take it off immediately; keep the fish warm; strain the gravy, and thicken with a good piece of butter; add a glass of port or sherry wine, a grate of nutmeg, and a little lemon juice. Simmer till it thickens, and then pour over the fish. Sauce, anchovy.

TO FRY STURGEON.

Cut the fish into rather thin slices; sprinkle it well with salt on both sides; when the salt has drawn out all the moisture of the fish, roll it in bread crumbs and egg, and fry it in hot lard. When done, take it out and put a glass of water, a spoonful of vinegar, and a little lemon-peel into the pan, give it a boil, cup and strain it over the fish.]

TO BOIL WHITINGS; (*French Receipt.*)

Having scraped, cleaned, and wiped them, lay them on a fish-plate, and put them into water at the point of boiling; throw in a handful of salt, two bay leaves, and plenty of parsley, well washed, and tied together; let the fish *just simmer* from five to ten minutes, and watch them closely that they may not be over-done. Serve parsley and butter with them, and use in making it the liquor in which the whittings have been boiled.

Just simmered from 5 to 10 minutes.

BAKED WHITINGS A LA FRANCAISE.

Proceed with these exactly as with baked soles, page 70, or, pour a little clarified butter into a deep dish, and strew it rather thickly with finely-minced mushrooms, mixed with a teaspoonful of parsley, and (when the flavour is liked, and considered appropriate) with an eschallot or two, or the white part of a few green onions, also chopped very small. On these place the fish, after they have been scaled, emptied, thoroughly washed, and wiped dry: season them well with salt, and white pepper, or cayenne; sprinkle more of the herbs upon them; pour gently from one to two glasses of light white wine into the dish, cover the whittings with a thick layer of fine crumbs of bread, sprinkle these plentifully with clarified butter, and bake the fish from fifteen to twenty minutes. Send a cut lemon only to table with them. When the wine is not liked, a few spoonful of pale veal gravy can be used instead; or a larger quantity of clarified butter, with a tablespoonful of water, a teaspoonful of lemon-pickle and of mushroom catsup, and a few drops of soy.

15 to 20 minutes.

TO BOIL MACKEREL.

In full season in May, June, and July; may be had also in early spring.

Open the fish sufficiently to admit of the insides being *perfectly cleansed*, but not more than is necessary for this purpose; empty them with care, lay the roes apart, and wash both them and the mackerel delicately clean. It is customary now to lay these, and the greater number of other fish as well, into cold water when they are to be boiled; formerly all were plunged at once into fast-boiling water. For such as

are small and delicate, it should be warm, but not scalding; they should be brought gently to a soft boil, and simmered until they are done; the scum should be cleared off as it rises, and the usual proportion of salt stirred into the water before the mackerel are put in. The roes are commonly replaced in the fish, but as they sometimes require more boiling than the mackerel themselves, it is better, when they are very large, to lay them upon the drainer by their sides. From fifteen to twenty minutes will generally be sufficient to boil a full-sized mackerel: some will be done in less time, but they must be watched, and lifted out as soon as the tails split, and the eyes are starting.

Dish them on a napkin, and send fennel or gooseberry sauce to table with them, and plain melted butter also.

Small mackerel, 10 to 15 minutes; large, 15 to 20 minutes.

TO BAKE MACKEREL.

After they have been cleaned and well washed, wipe them very dry, fill the insides with the forcemeat, No. 1 of Chapter VI., sew them up, arrange them, with the roes, closely together in a coarse baking-dish, flour them lightly, strew a little fine salt over, and stick bits of butter upon them; or pour some equally over them, after having just dissolved it in a small saucepan. Half an hour in a moderate oven will bake them. Oyster forcemeat is always appropriate for any kind of fish which is in season, while the oysters are so, but the mackerel are commonly served, and are very good with that which we have named. Lift them carefully into a hot dish after they are taken from the oven, and send melted butter, and the sauce cruets to table with them.

$\frac{1}{2}$ hour.

Obs.—The dish in which they are baked should be buttered before they are laid in.

FRIED MACKEREL; (common French receipt.)

After the fish have been emptied and washed extremely clean, cut off the heads and tails, split the bodies quite open, and take out the backbones;* wipe the mackerel very dry, dust fine salt, and pepper (or cayenne), over them, flour them well, fry them a fine brown in boiling lard, drain them thoroughly, and serve them with the following sauce: Dissolve in a small saucepan an ounce and a half of butter smoothly mixed with a teaspoonful of flour, some salt, pepper, and cayenne, shake these over a gentle fire until they are lightly coloured, then add by slow degrees nearly half a pint of good broth, or gravy, and the juice of one large lemon: boil the sauce for a couple of minutes, and serve it very hot. Or, instead of this, add a large teaspoonful of strong-made mustard, and a dessertspoonful of Chili vinegar, to some thick melted butter, and serve it with the fish. A spoonful of Harvey's sauce, or of mushroom catsup, can be mixed with this last, at pleasure.

FILLETS OF MACKEREL; (fried or broiled.)

Take off the flesh quite whole on either side, from three fine mackerel, which have been opened and properly cleaned; let it be entirely free from bone, dry it well in a cloth, then divide each part in two, and dip them into the beaten yolks of a couple of eggs, seasoned with salt

* We recommend in preference that the flesh of the fish should be taken off the bones as in the following receipt.

and white pepper or cayenne; cover them equally with fine dry crumbs of bread, and fry them like soles; or dip them into clarified butter, and then again into the crumbs, and broil them over a very clear fire of a fine brown. Dish them in a circle one over the other, and send them to table with the Maître d'Hotel sauce of Chapter IV., or with the one which follows it. The French pour the sauce into the centre of the dish; but for broiled fillets this is not so well, we think, as serving it in a tureen. The roes of the fish, after being well washed and soaked, may be dressed with them, or they may be made into patties. Minced parsley can be mixed with the bread-crumbs when it is liked.

BOILED FILLETS OF MACKEREL.

After having taken off and divided the flesh of the fish, as above, place it flat in one layer in a wide stewpan or saucepan, and just cover the fillets with cold water; throw in a teaspoonful of salt, and two or three small sprigs of parsley. Bring the mackerel slowly to a boil, clear off the scum with care, and after two or three minutes of slow simmering, try the fillets with a fork; if the thick part divides with a touch, they are done. Lift them out cautiously with a slice; drain, and serve them very hot with good parsley and butter; or strip off the skin quickly, and pour a Maître d'Hotel sauce over them.

MACKEREL BROILED WHOLE; (an excellent receipt.)

Empty, and cleanse perfectly a fine and very fresh mackerel, but without opening it more than is needful; dry it well, either in a cloth, or by hanging it in a cool air until it is stiff; make, with a sharp knife, a deep incision the whole length of the fish, on either side of the backbone, and about half an inch from it, and with a feather put in a little cayenne and fine salt, mixed with a few drops of good salad oil or clarified butter. Lay the mackerel over a moderate fire upon a well heated gridiron, which has been rubbed with suet; loosen it gently should it stick, which it will do unless often moved; and when it is equally done on both sides, turn the back to the fire. About half an hour will broil it well. If a sheet of thickly-buttered writing-paper be folded round it, and just twisted at the ends before it is laid on the gridiron, it will be finer eating than if exposed to the fire; but sometimes when this is done, the skin will adhere to the paper, and be drawn off with it, which injures its appearance. A cold Maître d'Hotel sauce (see Chapter IV.), may be put into the back before it is sent to table. This is one of the very best modes of dressing a mackerel, which in flavour is quite a different fish when thus prepared to one which is simply boiled. A drop of oil is sometimes passed over the skin to prevent its sticking to the iron. It may be laid to the fire after having been merely cut as we have directed, when it is preferred so.

30 minutes; 25 if *small*.

MACKEREL STEWED WITH WINE; (very good.)

Work very smoothly together a large teaspoonful of flour with two ounces of butter, put them into a stewpan, and stir or shake them round over the fire until the butter is dissolved; add a quarter-teaspoonful of mace, twice as much salt, and some cayenne; pour in by slow degrees three glasses of claret, and when the sauce boils, lay in a couple of fine mackerel, well cleaned, and wiped quite dry; stew them very softly